



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SELLS ARIZONA MAN SENTENCED TO 60 MONTHS FOR 325 POUNDS OF POT

PHOENIX, ARIZONA –Paul K. Charlton, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona, announced that on November 24, 2003, Joseph Anthony Norris, (D.O.B.) July 10, 1964 of Sells, Arizona, was sentenced to 60 months in prison to be followed by 48 months of supervised release, by United States District Judge John M. Roll, in Tucson, Arizona.

On May 8, 2003, Norris was stopped for speeding by a Tohono O'odham Reservation police officer after a 15 mile, high speed chase. Norris was driving a car which was not registered to him and contained 325 pounds of marijuana in the back seat and trunk. At the time of his apprehension, Norris admitted that he was about to deliver the marijuana to unknown persons in the Sells area for an amount of money that was still unknown to him.

Norris entered a plea of guilty on August 28, 2003 to a charge of Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana in violation of Title 8 United States Code, Section 841(a)(1). Norris was not eligible for the so called "safety valve exception" that permits less than the 5 year minimum sentence for first time offenders because he had been previously been convicted of a felony offense.

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The investigation in this case was conducted by Bureau of Customs and Immigration Enforcement and the Tohono O'odham Police Department.

The prosecution was handled by Richard I. Mesh, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-03-1144-TUC-JMR
RELEASE NUMBER: 2003-206

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